

Sex and Gender



Brittanie Gordon
She|Her

Women and Men's Roles

- Women and men played very distinct roles in the day to day activities
 - Marriage
 - Divorce
 - Leadership Roles

Marriage

- Marriage : Social arrangement encouraged and protected by God
- **Purpose** : To create a household (reproduction and financial wellbeing)
- Rabbi's defined legal marriage in 2 ways :
 - Traditional marriage ceremony
 - Qiddushin - Promising to get married
 - Most famously recognized through Mary and Joseph

Marriage Norms

- Jewish Marriages:
 - Men: Around age 30
 - Women: Around puberty
 - Within their ethnic group

Upper Class Families

- Fathers would ideally arrange marriages
- Prospective groom : Make marital payment (mohar)
 - Any dowry was property of the wife's
 - Ketubah payment : contract that formalized marital economic terms
- Jews preferred dowry not ketubah

Women's Roles in Marriage

- Jewish women could own property
- Expected to be subordinates (sexually)
 - BUT adult women had economic independence

Divorce

- According to Jesus only Porneia should push someone to divorce
 - Jesus allows divorce if wife is committing sexual infidelity but not other way around
- Rabanic law states: only men have a formal right to divorce
 - Adulteress : should forfeit Ketubah payment

Women in Leadership

- There were mentions of many Marys in the New Testament
 - ¼ of female population named Mary
- Mary Magdalene : Proclaimed Jesus as raised from the dead
 - Not recognized for her work as a leader

Jesus and Feminism?

- The emergence of feminism was tied back to Christianity
 - Claimed that Jesus was a feminist because he was offering equality
 - Seen as a form of anti Judaism: It suggests that Christianity is good feminists and Judaism have evil patriarchs
- Jewish women in the Jesus movement had more freedom and leadership roles that christian women did
- New testament does not paint Jesus as a feminist

Citations

Levine, Amy-Jill, and Marc Zvi Brettler, eds. *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*. 2 edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 0190461853.